

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & URBAN DESIGN
CITY OF WOODSTOCK – 12453 HIGHWAY92 – WOODSTOCK GA 30188
(770)592-6050 or WWW.WOODSTOCKGA.GOV

Variance Application Analysis

Case: V#097-10
Parcel(s): 92N05 040
Location: 118 Mill St
Total Area: ±1.0
Owner: Southern Landmark Properties
Applicant: GI Specialists Real Estate LLC
Current Zoning: DT-CBD
Request: 1) Parking Ratio of 5.3 per 1000, 2) Monument Sign on Mill, 3) Display window variance, 4) Green space not to be deeded or restricted, 5) reduce Mill St. clear zone from 22 to 13 feet to accommodate 24 foot drive aisles.

Comprehensive Plan Compatibility

URBAN CORE (T6)

The rising cost of housing, traffic congestion and the need to ensure the long-term economic ability of urban cores has helped to contribute to increased multi-use developments. Woodstock is currently experiencing a revitalization of its urban core. Always, but particularly now during this period of growth, new public spaces, private projects and infrastructure improvements should have a significant and visible component of public spaces, art and a mixture of uses. As the city grows it is increasing important to create a compact central core that will contribute to the existing energy and activity, while, amplifying and connecting the existing centers of activity. With guidance, density can create variety and vitality in a city core, which will enhance safety by reducing unpopulated, unused areas. Primary objectives within the urban core are to redevelop and revitalize existing historic buildings and to promote infill development that is a natural extension of the city's fabric. The "OldeTowne" is the heart of the City of Woodstock. This urban core is a true live, work, shop and play environment that includes a mixture of the City's municipal facilities, new commercial and residential, historic buildings and long term services. Downtown Woodstock is a place where the present embraces the past through a mixture of uses, distinctive architecture, idyllic streetscapes and a true sense of community. The Urban Core Character Area generally consists of the highest density development and the widest range of mixed uses, combined with central civic areas such as City Hall. Downtown neighborhoods and residential opportunities contribute to the overall vitality of the Urban Core. Buildings are attached and often tall, situated on a wide range of lot sizes. There is a very short mandatory front setback with wide sidewalks. The majority of the required parking is to be located to the rear, or provided on the street. All uses not considered noxious are permitted within the buildings. A diversity of development downtown can better support residential development and decrease the need for commuting, thus creating an urban core where people are able to live, shop and work in a walkable area. Complex multifaceted urban spaces bring people together in different ways, creating interaction and synergy. Urban cores thrive on the need for people to come together in so many ways, which cannot be strictly planned. Residential and Non-residential uses are an important part of the mix that creates an active community life in the core; creating a variety of uses is critical to having a successful 24-hour downtown. Vacant land and underutilized parcels within Olde Towne provide opportunities for new pedestrian-oriented mixed-use development or redevelopment. Nearby creeks and recreational facilities provide alternative transportation and recreation options. In addition, the Georgia Northeastern Railroad parallels Main Street, defining the downtown area, and provides future entertainment, community, and transportation opportunities.

Surrounding Land Uses

PROPERTY	LAND USE	ZONING
Subject	Vacant	DT-CBD
North	Office/Retail	DT-CBD
South	Office	DT-CBD
East	Office	DT-CBD
West	Office	DT-CBD

Summary

The variances requested by the applicant are consistent with the development of a medical office being developed under the requirements of the downtown master plan. This site is unique in the fact that it has two street frontages along Towne Lake Parkway and Mill Street and is affected by the alignment of the downtown grid network. The two road frontages and the City's request to align the driveway with the location of the future development of the grid network have created the need for several of the variances requested. As in previous cases, staff recognizes the need for the increase in parking requirements for medical offices based on the national guidelines of the ITE manual and other sources. The site and building are being developed in a similar fashion to the recently constructed building to the west that contains Thomas Eye Group and Marietta Plastic Surgery.

Staff Recommendation

Development Process Committee on 10/13/2010 voted to recommend approval of Variances as follows:

1. Approval of variance from section 7.767 (Required Spaces) and is hereby granted the right to have five (5) spaces per one-thousand (1,000) square feet for the portion of the building that is specifically used or designated for Medical Office use in accordance with the Medical Office use category of the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) manual. 90, 60 or 45 degree parking shall not be permitted on the east side of the access drive, therefore any parking spaces which are to be built on the east side of the access drive shall meet the requirements of parallel parking as specified in the Land Development Ordinance.
2. Approval of variance to section 6.5.2 (Downtown Sign Table) to allow a monument sign along the Mill Street frontage of the parcel included in this application. The sign shall not exceed thirty-two (32) square feet in area or five (5) feet in height and shall conform to all other sign guidelines and applicable provisions of the City of Woodstock's Sign Ordinance.
3. Approval of a variance to section 7.722 (Storefront Treatment Requirements) to waive the requirement of glass display windows and primary pedestrian entrances along the Street Façade of Towne Lake Parkway. The applicant agrees to meet the requirements of the display windows specified in this section, but may block them with interior walls and/or interior window coverings during such time that this space is used for Medical Office.
4. Approval of variance to section 7.725[4] (Open Space Requirements) requiring dedication of open space. The applicant agrees to maintain areas designated as open space on the final approved site plan as open space without having it be dedicated to the City or placed in a conservation easement as specified.
5. Approval of variance to section 7.727[5] (Street Type Table) to reduce the sidewalk area requirements from twenty-two (22) feet to seventeen feet (17) along the Mill Street frontage by not requiring the sidewalk supplemental zone of five (5) feet. Applicant agrees to adhere to the landscape zone of seven (7) feet and clear zone of ten (10) feet and further agrees to dedicate the property necessary to provide the landscape zone and clear zone to the City.

As a condition of the approval of these variance, the applicant agrees to the following:

1. Applicant agrees to dedicate any necessary right-of-way needed for the expansion of Towne Lake Parkway to the City and align the curb cut on Towne Lake Parkway based on the road widening plan requirements produced by MACTEC dated October 29, 2010 and included as Exhibit A.
2. Applicant agrees to dedicate a minimum of thirty (30) feet right-of-way which includes the driveway between Towne Lake Parkway and Mill Street. The legal instrument of dedication or a perpetual public use easement shall be approved and accepted by the City prior to the issuance of a Land Development Permit.

Planning Commission Recommendation

At the November 3, 2010 meeting the Planning Commission voted to approve V#097-10 in accordance with staff recommendation with the change indicated in #1 as follows;

1. Approval of variance from section 7.767 (Required Spaces) and is hereby granted the right to have ~~five (5)~~ **five point three (5.3)** spaces per one-thousand (1,000) square feet for the portion of the building that is specifically used or designated for Medical Office use in accordance with the Medical Office use category of the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) manual. 90, 60 or 45 degree parking shall not be permitted on the east side of the access drive, therefore any parking spaces which are to be built on the east side of the access drive shall meet the requirements of parallel parking as specified in the Land Development Ordinance.
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Page 3 of 4

Report Date:

11.08.08

